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Keywords: Awareness, Individual Empowerment, University Students' Behavior, Behavioral

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Empowering the Scholar: How Self-Empowerment Awareness Shapes Behavioral Patterns in Higher Education

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Abstract

Awareness of self-empowerment plays a transformative role in shaping behavioral patterns within higher education. This study aims to provide insights into how awareness of personal empowerment can be used as an effective strategy to promote positive behavioral change, personal growth, decision-making skills, and academic success among higher education students. This study employed a positivist approach to quantitatively examine the relationship between self-empowerment awareness and behavioral patterns among scholars in higher education. Stratified sampling was used to select respondents. A survey is usually used to collect information. For conducting this survey, two questionnaires were developed on a 5-point Likert scale. Questionnaires revealed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between USB (university students' behavior) and AIE (awareness of individual empowerment).

Keywords: *Awareness, Individual empowerment, University Students' Behavior, Behavioral*

Introduction

Behavior is defined as how an individual acts or responds in a particular situation. In higher education, students' behavior is a wide range of actions and attitudes. Anthropologists observe and study different types, including overt (observable actions), covert (internal mental processes), and social behavior (interaction with people). Behavioral control and desire for achievement have a significant influence on students' attention towards education (Biswas & Verma, 2021). Several academics and practitioners in higher education have pointed out the importance of students' experience at universities in the collection of skills, knowledge and their professional and personal development (Kumar, 2009). Throughout the world many universities are also beginning to position the improvement of students' behavior as priority. Understanding of students' behavior is interesting in this method for two reasons. First is regarded as an environmental one as it highlights how the learning environment affects a person's behavior and development, and second, it overlooks student efforts and their cognitive process that are concealed from view in favor of concentrating on visible behavior at university (Kahn, 2012). We look at university students' behavior at a higher level and a pattern of in-line actions that happen in reaction to what's going on around, which can change based on the basis of students' traits. The aspects of students' behavior at a higher level are related to the social connections of students to faculty and their classmates (Tino, 1997). Factors that influence students' behavior are academic responsibilities, Peer interaction, and Environmental adaptability**.** Academic responsibilities refer to the different duties and obligations that are expected to be held in an academic setting by students. Behavioral, academic, and ethical expectations are included in these responsibilities that make a productive learning environment. The responsibilities also play a vital role in fostering academic integrity. Responsibilities of students promote academic

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achievements and community involvement. On the other hand, peer Interaction in higher education has a great influence on students' behavior. Peer learning has become popular as a collaborative process that promotes effective involvement. Interaction between peers is a crucial aspect of student experience and has various impacts on academic involvement and behavioral growth. Major forms of peer interaction include collaborative learning, social networks, and casual interaction**.** Moreover**,** environmental adaptability in higher education affects behavior**.** The behavior of university students has many forms, changing and interacting according to the surrounding environment. Students come from different places, these behavior styles developed at their homes and norms, and is in turn strongly influenced by campus facilities, living habits, and study habits. Adaptability plays a crucial role in shaping students' adaptation to and interaction with the institutional environment**.**

Empowerment refers to the power that develops. Empowerment is the process by which individuals gain influence over outcomes that are important to them. Individual empowerment means having control of your life. Real individual empowerment is to set meaningful aims and goals to identify what you want from your life and take actions to achieve the goals and aims, and have more impact on the world. Self-empowerment is very important among students to identify their goals and achieve their aims. It is the process of students to have ownership of their development and learning, fostering their ability to make choices, actively participate in their education, and set goals. It involves students' essential skills, knowledge and confidence to become self –directed. An empowered student has the ability to make fruitful use of resources, feels self–efficacious and self-determined with a sense of responsibility. Stubborn individualism can transform into social engagement (Gutuskey et al .2014**).** Well -spaced practice opportunities enhance students' self-regulation for projects that present motivational and effort different challenges (Rahm & Lunkenbein, 2011). The aspects that make students more empowered are a good understanding of the invisible relation between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, having a positive mindset towards growth, knowing the purpose of life, and identifying their social needs, personal needs and educational needs for better experiences in life. University students are reorganized as a risk group, as the age when many young individuals enter higher education aligns with the onset of various problematic behaviors (substance abuse and internet addictions and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. The relationship between individual empowerment and students' behavior in the educational environment is substantial, as empowerment influences multiple aspects of student engagement and performance. This study shows that students who experience empowerment achieve higher grades, experience fewer behavioral problems and are more engaged in extracurricular activities (Kirk et al, 2016). Empowerment is associated with a sense of community and strong teacher-student connections, which also enhance student behavior. Self- efficacy and behavioral outcomes indicated that students with increased awareness of their academic abilities were more inclined to persevere through difficulties and attain greater academic success. Awareness fosters greater confidence, which is an essential aspect of empowerment. Awareness to empowerment generally results in beneficial effects, some students may feel pressured to succeed, leading to anxiety and stress. This highlights the importance of balanced strategies for empowerment that take into account the unique needs and circumstances of each student.

Awareness of individual empowerment affects the students' behavior in active engagement learning. Empowered students are always engaged and active in their learning by participating in multiple aspects of engagement, which enrich their learning experience and promote personal growth. Empowered students take ownership of their learning experience. Empowered learners demonstrate significant autonomy, enabling them to make knowledgeable decisions regarding their academic pursuits (Titus & Muttungal, 2023). When students become aware of the empowerment, they often assume leadership roles that impact their communities and educational environment. Students utilize their skills and organize projects. Students who are aware of the individual power they have, and empowerment of good and essential skills, have a great positive effect on their communication skills at university with peers, administration, and faculty. Students who are aware of their empowerment at the university level have a lot of collaboration skills in their social and academic environment. The active involvement of students in active engagement in their community and society is driven by their knowledge of their individual influence and duty to create positive change. Students' behavior at university plays a crucial role in lifelong personal development by nurturing

important skills, attitudes, and social interactions. (Wood, 2012). Overall, students' empowerment plays a fundamental role in shaping university behavior by fostering collaboration and active engagement. When students recognize their individual capabilities, they not only enhance their academic performance but also contribute in society and educational institutions at large (Ali et.al., 2014).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the level of university students' awareness regarding individual empowerment and to explore the nature of their behavior. The study further aims to investigate the relationship between awareness of individual empowerment and university students' behavior. Specifically, it will assess students' understanding of empowerment, including self- awareness, confidence and decision making and investigate how this awareness influences their actions, such as leadership goals and communication style. In addition, it seeks to identify whether significant differences exist in awareness and behavioral patterns between male and female university students (Gilani et.al., 2015). It will explore whether male and female students differ in their leadership styles, goal settings, and communication approaches. By examining these differences, the study seeks to provide deeper insight into the role of empowerment in shaping students' personalities.

Methodology

This study aims to explore the role of individual empowerment in students' behavior at the university level. For determining students' orientation to the target variable, the survey technique was preferred by the researchers as it helps to get the first hand information about the phenomena being studied. A survey is usually used to collect information from participants who are in large numbers and scattered geographically widely. For conducting this survey, questionnaires were developed on a 5-point Likert scale. Such skills help the respondent to respond in a systematic way to describe their level of agreement or disagreement regarding certain statements (Khan, Khan, & Saleem, 2015). This study employed a positivist approach to quantitatively examine the relationship between self-empowerment awareness and behavioral patterns among scholars in higher education. And the reason for selecting the quantitative approach the generalizability of the research. As this study helps in identifying and disseminating the students' opinions on a larger scale, a quantitative research design matched the purpose of the study.

The population of this study included all male and female students of two public sector universities studying during the academic year 2025-26 and enrolled in the faculties of education, life sciences, social sciences, and management sciences. In this study, a stratified sampling technique was used for the selection of respondents. Up to 50 students from each faculty of both universities were randomly approached. In total, 420 students were approached, out of which 325 responded. Selecting A relatively large sample helped the researchers in obtaining varied responses relating to the students empowerment and its respective effects. Moreover for establishing the generalizability of the research the sample was selected from wide range of institutions.

Two Questionnaires were developed for this study by the researcher. Questionnaire for University Students' Behavior (QUSB). It comprises 15 items divided into 3 factors including (Academic responsibility, Peer interaction, and environmental adaptability). The questionnaire was tested for its reliability, which was r=0.84. The subsequent questionnaire for Awareness to Individual Empowerment (QAIE). It also comprises 15 items divided into 3 factors, including Individual empowerment, Social empowerment, and academic empowerment. This questionnaire showed acceptable reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83. Both questionnaires reflect that they possess a good level of internal consistency, which describes the level of reliability. The structure of the questionnaires enabled a reliable examination of the relationship between empowerment and students' behavior within the university context.

Results

After collecting the data, it was tabulated and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-28). Before the analysis, the data were cleaned, and entries with missing values were deleted. The analysis and interpretation of data yielded the following results

Table 1

Correlation between Awareness to Individual Empowerment and University Students' Behavior

	N	Mean		Pearson r	Sig. (2-tailed)
University students' behavior	325	4.07		.636	.000*
Awareness of individual empowerment		3.94			

The correlation analysis in the above table revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between University students' behavior (USB) and awareness of individual empowerment (AIE) (r=636, p<.01). The findings imply that variations in AIE are meaningfully associated with changes in USB, thereby providing empirical support for the proposed relationship between the two variables.

Table 2

Effect of Awareness to Individual Empowerment and University Students' Behavior

Variable	Unstandardized (B)	Std. Error	Unstandardized (B)	t-value	Sig.(p)
Constant	1.570	0.170	_	9.231	<.001
Awareness of individual empowerment	0.635	0.043	0.636	.824	<.001

A linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether awareness to individual empowerment (AIE) significantly predicts university students' behavior (USB). The results indicated that AIE was a significant positive predictor of USBT, B=0.635, t(323) = 14.824, p < .001, suggesting that for each one-unit increase in AIEA, USBT increases by 0.635 units. The intercept was 1.570 (p < .001), and the standardized coefficient (β = 0.636) confirmed a strong positive relationship. Overall, these findings support the conclusion that AIEA is a significant positive predictor of USBT.

Conclusion

This study clearly indicates that awareness of individual empowerment has a positive influence on university students' behavior. Students who are aware of their power have critical thinking in education and have reflective practices. There is a significant positive relationship between awareness of individual empowerment and university students' behavior. Most of students already recognize their potential and act in ways that are responsible, respectful, and productive (Saleem etal., 2014). Students who feel empowered are more likely to develop the skills needed to change and reshape their learning environment, thereby improving their overall educational experience. Overall, the study confirms that building students' awareness of their individual empowerment can serve as a valuable strategy for promoting positive student behavior, which in turn contributes to a healthier, more engaged, and responsible university community, where active participation and shared values support both individual success and institutional development.

Discussion

The following discussion is directly derived from and supported by the conclusions of this research. The results of this study clearly show that understanding personal empowerment significantly influences university students' behavior. Students with keen understanding of their own skills, duties, and decision-making power often display more constructive behaviors in both academic and social settings. This aligns with current studies, which highlight that students who feel empowered are more inclined to engage in reflective thought, critical choice, and active involvement in their educational settings. Student empowerment enhances their personal, social development, their academic achievements, and emotional well -being. Students learn that effort is a good and effective way to achieve goals. Well-spaced practice opportunities enhance students' self-regulation for projects that present motivational and effort different challenges. It demonstrates that learners aware of this empowerment are inclined to interact more actively with their learning environment, which fosters a more vibrant and inclusive educational setting. Regarding participation and decision-making, (Serf & Mizikaci, 2022). An important element of this present research is the result indicating that no considerable gender differences existed in empowerment awareness or in behavioral outcomes. Male and female students exhibited an equally high degree of empowerment and positive conduct. This reinforces the idea that empowerment is advantageous for everyone, irrespective of gender, and that educational institutions ought to adopt empowerment strategies that are available and inclusive for every student. These results coincide with the existing literature and offer empirical evidence for the significance of awareness in promoting individual empowerment. The earlier researchers and findings of this study highlight an increasing agreement that empowerment is vital in fostering positive student behavior, nurturing leadership, supporting ethical principles, and enhancing educational results. Thus, the results of this study are in line with most of the previous researchers that the awareness of individual empowerment and students' behavior at the universities support each other. It means that the higher the level of individual empowerment, the more cooperative and sympathetic will be the behavior of the students, and vice versa. Another important aspect is that the empowerment of individual effects the students irrespective of their gender. It reflects whether the male or the female students feel empowerment as a positive attribute to their personality and behave similarly in their academic and everyday life. Hence, it can be said that individual empowerment is the key to efficient behavior and success in academic and social life.

The results of the research at hand indicate that there is a need for student empowerment at the institutions to enable them to work up to their full potential. It is, therefore, recommended that institutions should arrange for measures to empower students during their academic career so that they can grow into better men and women to proficiently fulfill their roles in society.

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